Education in Afghanistan: Role of NGOs

Introduction

Non governmental organizations (NGOs) play critical role in provision of humanitarian assistance. In crisis and fragile states, the role of NGOs as frontline service providers is even more critical as crisis may render the capacity of public services providers ineffective or virtually non-existent. In such situations assistance is channeled through NGOs that often take on quasi-governmental role in delivering social services like education.

Today, Afghanistan is recovering from the impact of twenty-five years of war and instability that destroyed the meager educational infrastructure existed before the start of the war in 1979. The end of the Soviet occupation in 1989 and the victory of the Mujaheddin did not bring tangible improvement to the status of the education system. Factional fighting between Mujaheddin parties over the power destroyed the remaining infrastructure and further delayed the reconstruction of the country. From 1994-2001, the Taliban's ban of female participation in the education system has further reduced educational opportunities and international support available to Afghans.

Through out this period a variety of NGOs and UN organizations provided formal and non-formal education programs reaching children in isolated rural communities, including girls. By the fall of Taliban in December 2001, an estimated 500,000 boys and girls were in schools receiving educational assistance through NGOs. Besides increasing access, NGOs carried out quality improvement programs such as training of teachers on basic competencies, developing joint education management information system, providing information on life-skill and peace building through variety of means including radiobroadcasts[1]. NGOs were also able to keep alive the concept of civic responsibility and participation. With the return of a legitimate government in 2002, NGOs and donors have continued to provide educational services and to collaborate with the government to meet the countries educational needs. This report looks at the role of NGOs played in the provision of education services to Afghans during the war and with particular focus on Taliban period and the initial years of the post-Taliban reconstructions.

Background of education in Afghanistan

Historically, Afghanistan's educational indicators were always low and the long armed conflict of the past two decades has practically destroyed the education infrastructure. The Taliban's restrictions on girls' education and female employment further exacerbated the situation, especially in urban areas.

In Afghanistan, traditionally the role of the state role in provision of education was limited. The mosque has been the main provider of

[1] United Nations General Assembly. (2001) Emergency Assistance for Peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan: report of the Secretary-General. December 2001.

education to the children. The majority of the Afghan people are conservative and view western secular education a threat to their culture and values rooted in Islam. However, the state support for modern education slowly increased since 1900s though it was concentrated in the cities and major towns. The first formal boys school (Habibia?) was established in 1904 in Kabul. It took almost two decades to establish the first formal school (Asmat) for girls in Kabul in 1921[2]. Approximately 2000 girls were enrolled in 1928. Graduates were sent to turkey for higher studies. King Amanullah's liberalization and expansion of education polices that included elimination of the veil and participation of women in the Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) met strong resistance in 1929 that resulted in the closure of some girls' schools and the reintroduction of the veil.

Though the constitution of 1964 made basic education compulsory the country never succeeded to achieve significant expansion. External assistance always played a key role. Agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and other bilateral and multilateral agencies provided support in various areas that included educational planning, primary education, teacher training, and adult education[3]. Turkey, France, Egypt, Germany, the USA, Japan, and the USSR provided significant assistance in secondary and technical education, and higher education. Major challenges included lack of adequate finance, ambiguous objectives, and shortage of trained manpower.

Pre-soviet Invasion (1978)

From historical perspective, the education sector was making a modest progress before the Soviet invasion. By 1978, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan to prop up the communist regime, the overall literacy rate was estimated at 18% for males, 5% for females and the gross enrollment rates at the primary level were approximately 54% for boys and 12% for girls. The completion rate was at approximately 0.3%. Approximately 1.2 Million students (18% girls) were enrolled in all levels of the education system[4]. The indicators for higher levels were more dismal, the GER at the secondary level for boys was approximately 16% and 4% for Girls[5].

[2] Karlsson, Pai, Mansory, Amir (2002) Islamic and Modern Education in Afghanistan- Conflictual or Complementary? Institute of International education, Stockholm University.
[3] Samadi, Saif R. (2001). Education and Afghanistan Society in the twentieth century. UNESCO. Paris 2001,
[4] Samadi, Saif R. (2001). Education and Afghanistan Society in the twentieth century. UNESCO. Paris 2001
[5] UNESCO. EFA 2000 Afghanistan

Education during the Soviet Occupation

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1978 set the stage for three decades of continuous conflict and destruction. An estimated 80% of school buildings at all levels have been damaged or destroyed. A large number of qualified teachers were killed or left the country.

During the war, 1978—1992, there were two types of education providers. The communist regime backed by the Soviets and the Mujaheddin groups with western support. The former saw education as the bases for building pro-soviet Marxist Afghan society and embarked on aggressive literacy and education campaigns covering both urban and rural areas. Soviet advisors were placed in all departments of the ministry of education, teachers who were members of communist party were sent to rural areas to spread the Marxist ideology. Thousands of Afghans were sent to Russia and its satellite countries for higher studies and indoctrination with the aim to create a significant future ruling cadre of pro-soviet Afghans. The traditional village governance structures and authority were replaced with communist style centralized and state structures staffed with party loyalists.

The rural Afghans strongly resisted this drastic change that contradicted their religious and social values. Resistance activities targeted schools and teachers as the messengers of this alien ideology. As a result, in 1990 there was a drastic reduction in the number of schools and student enrollment in rural areas. Some sources estimated that more than 80% of primary schools were destroyed or closed; teaching staff decreased 50% and student enrollment fell by 30%. Class sizes increased on average from 31-40 students to 60-90 students per class.6 About 6 million Afghans sought refuge in abroad mainly Pakistan and Iran. Millions more were living in Mujaheddin controlled areas inside Afghanistan.

The Mujaheddin resistance groups realized the importance of education in order to counter the Marxist influence and to preserve their belief, culture and traditions. An alliance of seven main political parties set up the Education Council of Afghanistan (ECA) to coordinate the provision of education in refugee camps and inside the country. NGOs took on quasi-governmental roles in provision of educational services; more than 28 NGOs and three UN agencies supported educational activities. By 1990, seventy percent of the 2,633 schools inside Afghanistan with 628,893 children (34% girls) were support by NGOs with teacher salaries, training, student supplies and textbooks.

The major cross-border education programs in terms of scale and reach included: the USAID-Funded University of Nebraska at Omaha's Education Center of Afghanistan (ECA/UNO) that supported about 636 schools. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) which was specifically set up for Afghanistan in 1984 supported more than 562 schools; the Afghanistan Education Committee (ECA) assisted 375 schools with funding from Sweden;

[6] Samadi, Saif R. (2001). Education and Afghanistan Society in the twentieth century. UNESCO. Paris 2001

Muslim Aid supported 271schools; and other agencies with significant school operations included Afghan Development Agency (ADA), Franco-Afghan Friendship Association (AFRANE), Médecins Sans Frontières (54 schools), the Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan (42 schools), the Islamic Relief Agency (18 schools).[7]

In addition to supporting schools inside Afghanistan, many NGO-run programs also contributed to the qualitative development of the education system. The University of Nebraska at Omaha's Education Sector Support Project (UNO-ESSP) funded by USAID made a significant contribution to the education of Afghan children both inside and in refugee camps in Pakistan. UNO/ESSP developed a curriculum for primary level (1-12), and trained 3,500 teachers (17% females). Though the curriculum was initially Jihad oriented--full of war messages, a revised version without the war messages became the standard curriculum to this day. Another NGO, Solidarité Afghanistan-Belgium (SAB) specialized on teacher training in both the refugee camps and inside Afghanistan for NGO-supported and government schools. UNESCO and GTZ/BEFARE collaborated to develop a manual for school administrators.

The defeat of the Soviet occupation in 1989 and the victory of the Mujaheddin to assume power did not bring tangible improvement of the status of the education system. As the demand for education increased with the return of refugees and people's aspirations for brighter future, the education system faced a new set of challenges: Factional fighting between Mujaheddin parties over the power destroyed the remaining infrastructure and further delayed the reconstruction of the country; international support started to dwindle in part due to the insecurity in the country.

Education under Taliban

The factional fighting between the Mujaheddin groups has disappointed many Afghans who supported them in the past and paved the way for the emergence of new political force called Taliban (students in Arabic) in 1994. The status of Afghanistan as a failed or fragile state continued through the Taliban rule from 1996 to 2001.

Before the advent of Taliban, about 1,000 of the 2,200 schools that existed in the country in 1993 were supported with international assistance channeled through NGOs. This represented about 25% of the estimated one million children enrolled in primary schools in Afghanistan. In Pakistan NGOs supported the primary education of 90,000 children in refugee camps[8].

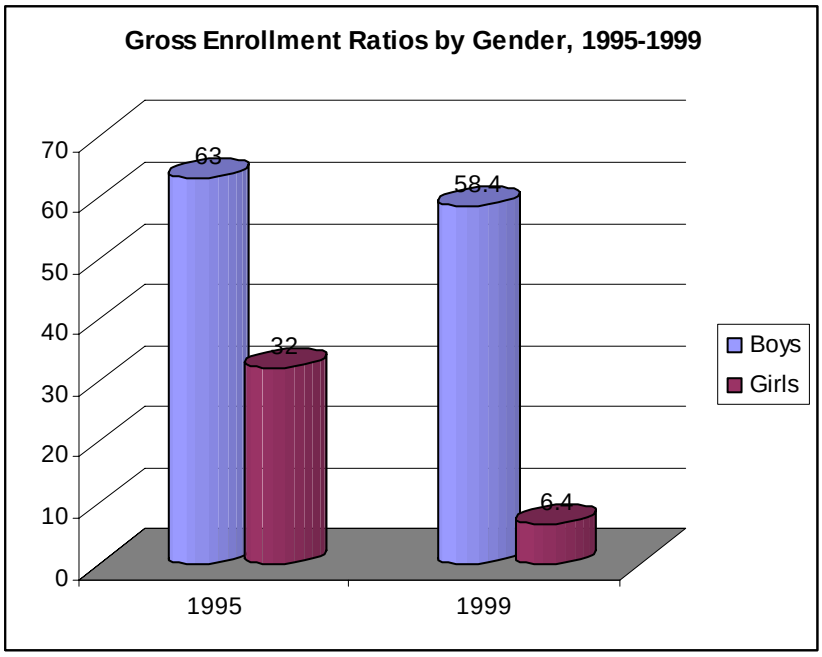
During the Taliban rule, the education system further deteriorated and there was an active attempt to dismantle the concept of civic participation. Limited educational services were provided by Ministry of Education, Ministry of

[7] Samadi, Saif R. (2001). Education and Afghanistan Society in the twentieth century. UNESCO. Paris 2001
[8] Save the Children and UNESCO (1998) Education for Afghans: Strategy Paper.

Religious Affairs, NGOs/Agencies (national and international); and local communities. The Ministry of Education and its provincial directorates lacked the capacity--financial, trained staff, and leadership—to provide education to Afghan children. Moreover, the Taliban's restrictive education polices and the on-going war with Northern Alliance (remnants of Mujahiddin factions) has further limited the government support to formal education system.

The Taliban closed formal girls' schools and banned female employment; strictly enforced the 'Purda' and the segregation of women; introduced new curriculum heavy on religious subjects; and converted many formal and non-formal schools into Madrasas under the direction of Ministry of Religious Affairs. In 1998 the Taliban closed about 100 NGO-supported girls' schools and home-based vocational training programs for women in Kabul. According to EFA 2000 estimates girls Gross enrollment ratio fell from 32 just before Taliban take over Kabul in 1995 to 6.4 in 1999.

External funding for education reached lowest levels. The international assistance community in protest to the provocative policies and practices of the Taliban on gender and human rights adopted a "principled engagement" approach whose terms include discouragement of capacity building assistance for the Taliban authorities. This meant a conditional engagement with Taliban authority on all matters other than the provision of life-saving assistance. Some donors withdraw funding to an education system that is officially open only to boys. As a result, education funding fell to just 0.3 percent in 1997 from 22 percent in 1993, while funding for emergency programs rose to 75 percent of all ODA for Afghanistan, up from just 25 percent in 1993. The meager funding available was mostly on a short-term basis—six to one year-- and funded as emergency response with no log-term commitment. This situation severely limited the scale of the NGOs programs and served only a small percentage of the primary school age children in need of education. Support for secondary or tertiary education was negligible or non-existent.



Role of NGOs and Delivery Models

Despite the odds, a variety of NGOs and UN agencies were able to provide education services that reached children in both rural and urban areas. They were also able to keep alive the concept of civic responsibility and participation. In the absence of effectively functioning public service delivery, NGOs filled the void taking on quasi-governmental roles by providing services including primary education (especially for girls in rural areas).

NGOs implemented variety of innovative education programs and diverse flexible delivery models appropriate for different contexts to reach diverse target groups. The range of the NGOs service delivery models can be broadly classified into 1) Quasi-Public schools in both rural and urban areas. The program of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) exemplifies these model; 2) Community-based schools in rural areas. CARE and IRC among others mainly used these model; 3) Home-based schools in urban cities like Kabul and Herat. This model emerged, in part as a defiant response, after Taliban officially closed girls schools and banned employment of female teachers; 4) Complementary and Special programs

1. Quasi-Public Schools

The main feature of this model is support to formal schools. The scale and reach of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan's (SCA) education program fit the quasi-governmental role. Since 1994, the SCA has been providing education inside Afghanistan by building and rehabilitating schools in central locations for cluster of villages or in major towns. In 1999, SCA was supported 650 schools with 160, 000 students (19% girls). The main features of this model include:

- Construction of schools
- Salary contributions for school staff
- Provision of materials and supplies
- Teacher training.

2. Support to Community based schools (Rural).

In Afghanistan context, the terms community-based schools, and home schools are often interchangeable. For our purpose here, the former is distinguishable from the latter in the sense that it is initiated and controlled by an organic community mostly in rural areas and is in response to local initiatives to meet the demand for education especially for girls. Over 70% of Afghans live in rural areas where populations are scattered in small villages distant from schools at district centers. Communities realize that education is the key to better future of their families. Unfavorable cultural norms and distance to schools prevented are among the barriers to girls schooling. The Community-schools model responds to the high demand for accessible education in rural areas where public services cannot reach and where Taliban's enforcement capacity is weak.

In the remote areas away from Taliban attention parents organized schools along the traditional ways, in the Mosque, *Hujira* (living room of a house), public building, or in open air under a tree. Despite Taliban policies communities keen to put their children, both boys and girls, in schools provided that they control or have say in what, where, and who teaches their children. A number of NGOs supported a community based education model that builds on traditional Quran school structure but introduced secular quality primary education for boys and girls in rural villages and enabled communities to assume ownership of the schools. The emphasis was on mobilizing and building the capacity of communities to organize and manage schools within their villages. Communities find a place for the school, hire and pay teacher salaries, and form education committees to oversee school affairs. In most cases, the NGO provided inputs that are not available locally such as school and students supplies, trained schoolteachers and education committees and contributed school construction materials where communities organized themselves to build a permanent structure for a schools.

SCHOOL

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

Human Resources
- Village Education Committee Members
- Teachers

Material Resources
- School facilities
- Teachers' salaries

COPE CONTRIBUTION

Human Resources
- Teacher Trainers
- Community Mobilizers

Material Resources
- Instructional materials
- Assistance with school Construction

The model is distinguished from most other community schools in the level of contribution that it requires from the community. This high commitment from the communities seeks to ensure their long-term success when the agency phases out support. One of the well know programs under this model is CARE's Community Organized Primary Education (COPE) project which provided primary education to more than 45,000 children (60% girls) in 2003 before started handover some schools to the minister of education.

3. Home-based (urban):

The Home-based schools, often called under-ground schools, were common in urban areas such as Kabul and Herat during Taliban rule and were mainly a defiant response to Taliban ban on girls' education and employment of female teachers. Female teachers laid off from formal schools were teaching classes in their homes. Parents paid small fee per child to support the teachers. NGOs covertly supported these home-schools with materials and occasional teacher training. In some cases, educated parents schooled their girls in their homes.

In major cities where the Taliban attention and enforcement of polices were stronger, home-based schooling was risky but appropriate option under the circumstance. The speed with which home-schools mushroomed attests to the demand for education, resilience of the Afghan people, and the resistance to the Taliban policies. It was rumors that some local Taliban's even sent their daughters to the home-schools in Kabul. Some sources estimated that over 45,000 girls under age 10 were attending these secret schools up to the fall of the Taliban in November 2001[9].

4. Complementary and Special programs

Most NGOs focused on provision of primary education. Only a handful of NGOs provided some form of supplementary, vocational training, literacy or programs for special groups for adolescents, young boys, and men and for women in particularly vulnerable situations. Programs offered included peace building, conflict resolution, psychosocial, landmine awareness, food for education, horticulture, health education, and mother and child care education.

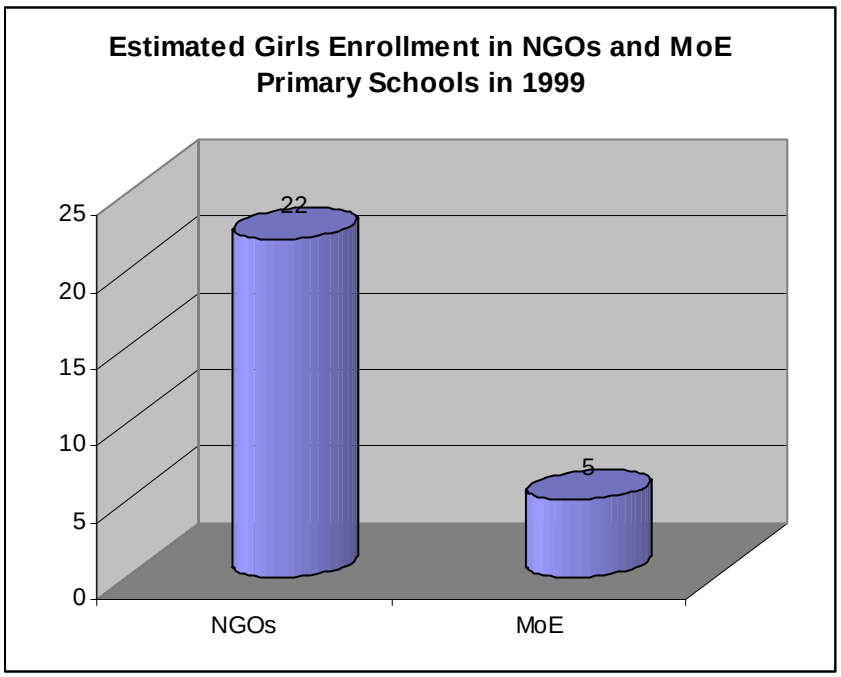
Types of programs

The educational services of NGOs covered many sub-sectors in both formal and non-formal settings. These included teacher training, development and distribution of textbooks, instructional materials development, monitoring and supervision, assessment, construction/rehabilitation, literacy education, distance education, as well as training in computer and English language. The majority of the agencies supported primary education both formal and informal. Teacher training was the second largest service NGOs engaged in followed by literacy, construction and rehabilitation of schools, and complementary and special programs including alternative programs. Secondary and tertiary education received least support. Few agencies supported Quranic schools and madrasas.[10] Target groups included urban and rural children, out-of-school youth, disabled children, orphans, women in distress, and other vulnerable groups. The cost of educating one child for one year varied from US$10-30 and NGOs/ agencies. See appendix X for matrix of programs and agencies.

[9] UNICEF (2001) Lost chances: the changing situation of children in Afghanistan, 1990-2000.
[10] Save the Children and UNESCO (1998) Education for Afghans: Strategy Paper.

Impact of NGO Services:

Roughly, 50 NGOs/agencies were providing educational services teacher training scope during the Taliban rule reaching over 250,000 children mostly in rural areas. This represented about 25% of children in primary schools and less than 10% of the estimated 3.6 million primary school age children in the country[11]. In urban cities such as Kabul, a limited number of mosque schools (grades 1-3) were the only official educational opportunities available to young girls. In 1999, an international NGO, with the approval of Ministry of Religious Affairs, supported the schooling of about 13,632 children (45% girls). An unknown number of underground home-schools were run by female teachers with the support of NGOs and CSOs. In Kabul, some sources estimated that 60,000 children, mostly girls were receiving education through underground home-schools and some mosque schools endorsed by Taliban.



In addition to providing access to education, NGOs made significant contributions in many other sub-sectors:

- The primary school curriculum developed by UNO/ESSP with USAID funding in early 90s is still the bases for the primary education
- NGOs and UN agencies developed minimum learning competencies
- Supplementary reading materials
- Teacher training curriculum
- Human resource development e.g. teachers and program managers.
- Community networks built by NGOs facilitated the success of back to school campaign in the last three years.
- Built capacity of Civil Society organization to provide educational services--Through partnerships, funding and training NGOs helped the emergence of active LNGOs and CBOs.
- Mobilized communities to organize themselves and form committees that manage schools, advocate for their right of education, thus empowering them to resist the Taliban polices on girls education.

[11] UNICEF (2001) Lost chances: the changing situation of children in Afghanistan, 1990-2000.

- NGOs through employment and training built the cadre of skilled Afghans estimated at thousands who run the programs inside Afghanistan when security situation call for pull out of expatriates.

Challenges NGOs faced to increase Access and quality

In the backdrop of more twenty-five years of continues fighting, civil strive, recurring natural calamities such as droughts and earthquakes and constant change of political leadership, the humanitarian community faced many challenges to effectively respond to the ever changing nature of the crises in Afghanistan. Some of the most pertinent challenges for the education sector include:

- The threat of insecurity and political instability forced many NGOs to operate across the border from neighboring countries such as Pakistan with little or no expatriate presence on the ground to effectively direct implementation to monitor. It also increased the cost of program implementation.

- The Taliban restrictions on girls' education and female teachers' employment and other questionable human rights practices led many NGOs/donors to suspend their educational assistance on principal grounds.

- External funding for education reached its lowest levels during the Taliban rule. Some donors withdraw funding to an education system that is officially open only to boys. As a result, education funding fell to just 0.3 percent in 1997 from 22 percent in 1993, while funding for emergency programs rose to 75 percent of all ODA for Afghanistan, up from just 25 percent in 1993. The meager funding available was mostly on a short-term basis—six to one year-- and was earmarked for emergency response with no long-term commitment. This situation severely limited the scale of the NGOs programs and served only a small percentage of the primary school age children in need of education. Support for secondary or tertiary education was negligible or non-existent. The project-oriented short-term approach adopted by most donors with uncertainty of funding from one year to the next was a hindering factor in reaching scale.

- Limited infrastructure, qualified human resources, and general services inside the country have slowed the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery programs compromised NGOs ability to reach more areas and marginalized groups.

- The paucity of reliable statistics and data on almost all sectors and particularly in the education has often led to inefficient planning of limited resources.

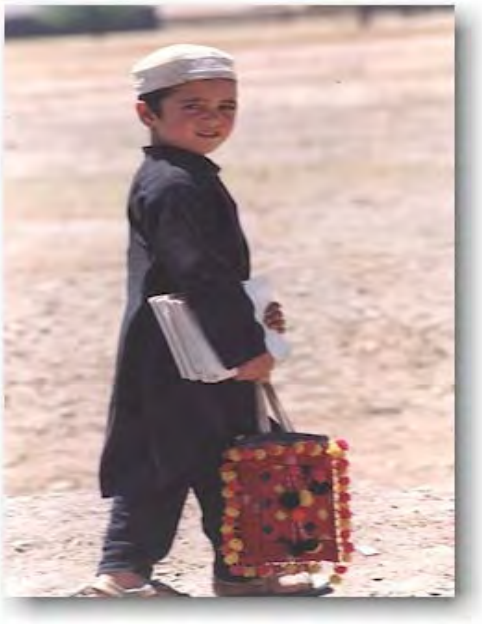
- Lack of coordination and standardization in NGO supported education was a major challenge. In addition, dwindling donor aid flow and donor interest especially during Taliban has adverse effects on the scale of NGO programs.

Coping Strategies

The international assistance community's strategies dealing with Taliban ranged from constructive to combative. Some NGOs discontinued all assistance to the education sector after the Taliban restricted girls' education and banned female employment. UNICEF and some other donors and NGOs withdraw support to Taliban controlled schools and formal education[12]. Others shifted their focus to rural areas where demand is high and is away from the attention of the Taliban as in major cities, or to the northern part of the country not under Taliban control. Most adopted a "principled engagement" approach which meant to isolate the Taliban and not to directly support activities that build the capacity of the Taliban education authorities and institutions. Instead, most supported alternative models for building capacity at the community level where it was needed most.

In situations where it was inevitable not to engage Taliban authorities, NGOs adapted a pragmatic approach. In the provinces outside the capital and even in Kabul NGOs engaged Taliban in dialogue on solving practical problems, securing authorization for operating in the country or province, and cooperation for delivering particular services.

The bulk of NGOs programs, however, targeted rural areas. Implementation of Taliban policies on girls education was inconsistence and largely ineffective in rural areas. This gave an opportunity for NGOs to focus on rural areas where the need was greatest. The community-based programs encouraging community support to the education of their children have seen increased demand for education in neighboring unsupported communities. Involvement of religious leaders considerably reduced their sensitivity to formal education. In addition, a growing commitment by communities to sustain education services was observed, with examples of communities facing the Taliban authorities to petition for reopening of schools after many years of silence regarding education for their children.



To adapt to the ban on female employment, except the health sector, some NGOs managed to change the job titles of their female schoolteachers and teacher trainers as health

[12] Johnson, Chris and Leslie, Jolyn (2002) Coordination Structures in Afghanistan. HPG Background Paper. ODI.

trainers to avoid open confrontation with Taliban.

Lessons Learned
Some of the lessons learned include that:

- Despite Taliban restrictions on girls' education, negative attitudes towards girls' education were changing. There was a high unmet demand for education among Afghan people. Many parents and communities were willing to contribute significantly to the education of both their boys and girls. Communities demonstrated this commitment through provision school facilities, hiring and paying teachers, and managing schools through VECs.

- Communities were no longer waiting for a government to provide schools and teachers; they exercised self-reliance by organizing and supporting their own schools.

- The community-based approach is low cost, sustainable, respects local socio-cultural norms, and significantly increases the enrollment and retention of girls making it especially suitable for rural Afghanistan where the central government services cannot reach.

- When communities are given responsibility and control of the education of their children they can find solutions to the challenges that stand in their way. By enabling communities to decide whom, where, and how their children are taught NGOs have ensured that Afghan boys and girls receive secular education, despite the Taliban restrictions in place.

- Schooling throughout the crises in Afghanistan provided children in addition to cognitive development, protection and sense of normalcy in unstable and up normal situation and promoted psychosocial well being.

- Community-based and home-based school models empowered communities to take action to find solutions to their problems, govern their affairs, and become actors beyond in the wider society.

Post-Taliban reconstruction of the education system
The fall of the Taliban in 2001 has unleashed unprecedented demand for education that dramatically exceeded projections and the supply capacity. There is an atmosphere of excitement, expectation, and determination in schools throughout the country. Parents are keen to return their children to school. Within the last three years, the number of children enrolled in schools has increased to almost four million. This commitment to education will be an important force for rebuilding the education system.

Despite such impressive achievements, there is a long way to go; close to 50% of all school age, children are not attending schools because there are

not enough schools or teachers. According to the recent *Report Card*[13] by the Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium, there is a huge disparity between girls and boys enrollment, and between urban and rural areas. Only 34% of those enrolled in primary schools are girls. In some rural areas in Zabul and Badghis provinces, for instance, 99 out of 100 girls are not in school. Enrolment in major cities such as Kabul and Herat is estimated at 87% and 85% respectively while in other provinces less than fifty percent of all children receive schooling.

NGOs and aid community face radically different political and legal environment. The Interim Government, as a recognized sovereign, owns and directs aid operations at all levels.
A much larger number of NGOs, both international (for-profit and not-for-profit) and national NGOs are engaged in the provision of education. However, unlike Taliban time, most NGOs entered formal agreement with the ministry of education as implementing partners.

The increased high unmet demand and the limited capacity of the reach of public services make the role of NGOs critical as ever. In cooperation and partnerships with MoE, NGOs expanded their services with particular focus on rural areas where government schools are not available; they target older age children, mainly girls, with accelerated learning programs for those lost opportunities in the past; participate in the construction of schools; and printing and distribution of textbooks. NGOs also help with building the capacity of the formal education system in area of teacher training for MoE school teacher, and assist MoE at all levels including policy formulation and strategic planning.

Implications for design of education programs in fragile states
Through out the last two and half decades and particularly during Taliban rule a variety of NGOs and other international organizations were not only able to provide quality education programs reaching children in isolated rural communities, including girls, but were also able to contribute to the building of foundations for reconstruction in post-conflict situation.

NGOs' continuous presence on the ground during crisis enables them to make effective adaptations to changing political contexts and lays foundations for transition to post-conflict reconstruction. In Afghanistan, through partnerships, funding and training NGOs helped the emergence of active LNGOs and CBOs. They mobilized communities to organize themselves and form committees that manage schools, advocate for their right of education, thus empowering them to resist the Taliban polices on girls education.

NGOs contributed to the building of Afghanistan's human capital. NGOs/agencies have employed and upgraded the competencies of Afghan professionals in all sectors that are now playing critical roles in the

[13] The Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium. Report Card: Progress on Compulsory Education Grades 1-9. March 2004.

rebuilding of country. A number of current and former cabinet members and others in high level positions in line ministries come from the NGOs and humanitarian sector. The English speaking techno-savvy Afghans employed by diplomatic missions, donors agencies, international coalition and security forces, private and international agencies as senior and mid-level managers, administrative assistants, communication/IT experts, translators and interpreters are mostly the products of the NGOs services for the last two and half decades.

With the return of a legitimate government, NGOs and donors using their experience have continued to provide educational services and to collaborate with the government to meet the countries educational needs. A variety of delivery channels are necessary to reach children in diverse physical and socio-cultural settings.

Education should be part of the humanitarian emergency preparedness plans. The engagement of NGOs in the provision of education services during crisis has the potential to ensure that a child in conflict situation attains quality education. In complex emergencies such as Afghanistan, NGOs have the infrastructure and technical capacities to deliver educational services for populations that would otherwise not be served.

NGOs provide vital skills development to a labor force that would otherwise be idle and both instill and help to continue civic involvement on the part of communities.

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12. UNICEF (2001) Lost Chances: the changing situation of children in Afghanistan, 1990-2000.

Appendix 1. Agencies working in education in Afghanistan (1999) [14]

	Agency Initials	Agency Name	Program Type
1	AABRAR	Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation	**Literacy programme**
2	ADA	Afghan Development Association	Primary education, Non-Formal education, Repair of schools, Supply of textbooks
3	AGBASEd	Afghan German Basic Education	Primary education, Non-formal education, Teacher training, Out of school children, Mother and child health
4	AIL	Afghan Initiative for Learning	Non-Formal education
5	AMRA	Afghanistan Mobile Reconstruction Association	Primary education, Non-formal education
6	AMRAN	Afghan Mobile Reconstruction Association	Literacy programme
7	AREP	Afghan Refugee Education Project	Primary education
8	ARF	Afghan Relief Foundation	Primary schools Secondary schools
9	ARD	Afghanistan Rehabilitation and Development Centre	Primary education
10	ARR	Afghan Relief and Rehabilitation	Primary education
11	AWRC	Afghan Women's Resource Centre	Vocational training, Literacy
12	ARDA	Agency for Rural Development of Afghanistan	Non-Formal education
13	ACRU	Ariana Construction and Rehabilitation Unit	Non-Formal education
14	ASHIANA	Afghan Street Working Children and New Approach	Primary education, , Vocational Training,
15	BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation	Distant education

[14] Adapted from UNESCO. EFA 2000 Afghanistan. Appendix

16	CARE-I	CARE International	Primary education, Non-Formal education
17	CAWC	Central Afghanistan Welfare Committee	Primary education, Non-Formal education
18	CCA	Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan	Primary education, Non-Formal education, Publication of journal/ newsletter
19	CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance	Literacy programme, Teacher training, Computer and language courses
20	COFFA		Primary education
21	CRAA	Committee for Rehabilitation Aid to Afghanistan	Primary education, Non-Formal education
22	DCA	Dutch Committee Afghanistan	
23	GTZ-BEFARe	German Agency for Technical Cooperation-Basic Education for Afghan Refugees	Primay Education
24	HCI	Human Concern International	Home-based education of girls
25	IRA	Islamic Relief Agency	Primary Education, Non-Formal education, Orphan schools, Health, Social welfare, Rural development
26	IAM	International Assistance Mission	Primary Education
27	IIRO	International Islamic Relief Organization	Teacher training, Orphan schools
28	IRC	International Rescue Committee	Non-Formal education, Female Education Programme
29	NAC	Norwegian Afghanistan Committee	Primary Education, Teacher training, Construction of schools
30	NPO/RRAA	Norwegian Project Office/Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan	Education, Skill Training
31	OC	Ockenden International	Primary Education
32	PSD	Partners for Social Development	Primary education, Non-Formal education
33	SAA	Swiss Aid for Afghans	Primary Education
34	SERVE	Surveying Emergency Relief and Vocational Enterprise	Primary education, Non-Formal education
35	SIEAL	Sanayee Institute of Education and Learning	Non-Formal education

36	SC-US	Save the Child-US	Literacy programme
37	SAB	Solidarite Afghanistan Belgium	Basic education, Literacy programme, Teacher training, Vocational training
38	SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan	Primary education, Non-Formal education, Literacy programmes
39	SWC	Social Development Cell	Primary Education
40	UNHABITAT	United Nations Center for Human Settlement	Non-formal Education
41	UNESCO	United Nations education and Scientific organization	Teacher Training, supplementary materials
42	UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees	Primary Education
43	UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund	Primary Education
45	UNO	University of Nebraska at Omaha	Publication of textbook, Teacher training, Primary education
46	WRC	Welfare and Relief Committee	